

# HERALD

October 2002  
Issue 2 - Volume 38

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U of T students found deep in preparation for Homecoming Parade

## One Man's View of Democracy

**Productively using the mandatory space for student council was not on his books for this issue, so Jacky Sin has instead used this segment to detail a recipe for a really rippin' lentil soup.**

Well, no, not really, but faced with either writing about lentils or facts, this writer chooses the more cosmopolitan route to tell you about the ICSS. However, before I start, I must disclose the fact that I have promised the editors of the Herald that I will not go on a ramble about bubblegum promises the ICSS wants to make and hopes to keep. Instead, I am simply going to tell you about who we are and what we do. To find out what we plan to do this year, we invite you to come down to the ICSS office and chat with us in person.

The Innis College Student Society, or ICSS for those who are tired of remembering words, is a body that tends to the educational concerns of its members; we act as a political advocacy group within the university and we are also your big friendly and inclusive family while you are away from home. Our office is located at the end of the hall past the Innis Café in the College building. You are welcome to drop by to talk with us about tuition fees, ideas for future College events, esoteric enlightenments or even just to buy a locker. Actually, speaking of lockers, this last point is the continued on page 3...

## An Academic Bias

**Co-editor Corey Katz explores what he feels is the pro-Palestinian bent of the Left and academia.**

It seems to have become unpopular today among university professors, university students, activists and other politically minded individuals, along with those on the "left" (whatever distinctions like that even mean anymore!) to speak in support of Israel. In fact, it has almost become the norm on university campuses to see "anti-occupation" posters and flyers, but rarely ever any pro-Israel propaganda. In fact, when I opened up this year's Arts & Science Student Union Anti-Calendar I was dismayed (but not all that surprised) that it was "Dedicated to the memory of the Innocents, Afghanistan and Palestine murdered." What happened to the Innocents killed by two years of suicide bombings in Israel?—Killed by bombers

whose express goal it was to kill or injure as many Israelis as possible! What happened to the Innocents killed by the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center? Why were they not mentioned in the Anti-Calendar? Don't get me wrong—I'm not the hugest fan of the United States' foreign policy, nor am I a great supporter of many of the actions Israel has taken against the Palestinians. However, to not list these two groups who are just as "Innocent", merely because it is not "politically correct" for young, aware university students to do so, is absurd and offensive. What happened to free speech and honest debate in the academic spirit? I'll tell you what happened to it!

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## feature October

**An Innis student's in-depth examination of punk rock reveals its history as a social movement and its firm grounding in politics.**

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## An Academic Bias ...continued from the front page.

Early last month, former Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was invited by a Jewish youth group to speak at Montreal's Concordia University. For those who don't know, Netanyahu was Prime Minister from 1996-1999 and was defeated by Ehud Barak. Throughout his term, and to this day, Netanyahu is regarded as somewhat of a war-monger. History looks at him in this light because he was never a great supporter of the peace process, at least while violence against Israel continued. Lately, he has been on a tour of Canadian cities and universities giving talks on the current terrorism situation in Israel and throughout the world. A few hours before he was to give his talk at Concordia, pro-Palestinian protesters began to gather and peacefully protest outside the building, hassling people as they entered. As the time of Netanyahu's arrival approached, a large group of protesters stormed into the building with the intent of making it impossible for the former PM to enter, thereby preventing the speech. Riot police were immediately called in to prevent a group of protesters from getting to the auditorium where attendees sat waiting for Netanyahu. As the protest continued to escalate and police attempted to force the protesters back out of the building, others still outside the building smashed a plate glass window, while the protesters inside threw chairs and newspaper boxes at police. Police responded with pepper spray and a canister of tear gas to disperse the protesters, and made only a couple of arrests. Meanwhile, three hours had passed and the attendees had waited, most too scared to leave, only to find out that Netanyahu

was not coming because of safety concerns. Attendees were escorted out of the building ten at a time by police, and were led through the protesters, who were held back by security barriers and other police officers and security personnel. The protesters threw bottles at people's heads, screamed anti-Israel and anti-Semitic taunts and attempted to break down the barriers to get at the attendees. Some protesters threw pennies and coins at the attendees – one of the oldest ways to taunt Jews by emphasizing the stereotype that Jews are "money-grubbing."

Though I do not agree with Netanyahu's sometimes war-mongering attitude, that does not mean I think he should not be allowed to speak. If a former leader of the PLO ever came to visit Canada, I would think he should be allowed to speak as well. Universities especially, are supposed to be places where ideas can be freely exchanged and true debate can take place. The idea that one side in the Israel/Palestine debate is wrong and the other is right; that one is completely at fault and the other innocent, is absurd, and does not suggest a mature conception of politics. By attempting to prevent debate and free speech, the protesters merely exemplified the current situation in Israel – a situation that more and more, tragically, is moving further and further away from being solved with words and dialogue.

Furthermore, this is my opinion. I'm sure some of you disagree. Write to us. If it's good, we'll publish it. Please no hate email; only civilized dialogue at [innisheralt@yahoo.com](mailto:innisheralt@yahoo.com).

## The Ties that Bind Stephanie Silverman ponders her trend-setting youth.

When I was young, I wore a tie. I was the only kid on the block with a distinct sense of fashion futurism and I coupled it with a sense of rebellion against social norms that only an angsty teen could feel that deeply. I wore a tie and, for that, I was mocked. Everyday. So I sold out and stopped. What I realize now is that I was not being radical like I professed. Rather, my ties were my oars with which I tried to paddle madly against the current of trends that is always threatening to wash individualism away. The radicalism that once was is now yet another marketing tool for yet another flash-in-the-pan who will most likely be swept away by the very trends that brought her to our cultural attention in the first place. My abhorrence is thus not directed at the sacrilege of a clothing item that I had worn so reverently; it is directed at the transparency of the idea of radicalism and how quickly it becomes yet another tie with which we hang ourselves and our youthful enthusiasm.

Instead of growing embittered by this experience and its irony, I resolve to become smarter. I will transform this lesson from one of jaded, self-conscious fashionista of fourteen years into editor of a dashing brilliant newspaper that hereby chucks out all future use of the word, "radical" as

it has become a buzzword of late for "cheap exit". I also resolve never to conform to the Herald to those funny-until-you-read-them-twice "social commentaries" that are really just some guy's excuse to berate a man for sporting a mullet or fill space in the ASSU Anti-Calendar. Yes, the NDP is good and Marx was clever but those on the Right of OCAP still have a voice and they have a right to make it heard in their school newspaper. Photos of my friends and myself are always delightful but pictorial essays on the decay of the city and the beginning of the metropolis are better. I want to forge the path between radicalism and trends because, unfortunately, they are far more intertwined than I'd like to admit. The crags in this too that unites them are very easy to fall into and too deep to climb back out of without a fight. Then the mandate of our newspaper becomes not an intentional acceptance of mainstream notions of what being different means but rather the successful discarding of norms and trends in search of our own voices. What the newspaper can say or do is unique from other vessels for social change and is important regardless of clothing, appearances, or any other "trend". Words are forever. Reject conformity, radical or otherwise.



## The Repulsion of It All

**CINSSU'S Brian Nugent invites you out for a whirlwind night of Roman Polanski and a guy named Friendly Rich, as strange as that combination sounds.**

Horror is a pretty strong word. It's like the mean-ass older brother of such lesser words as 'scare' or 'fright'. Yet film after film is casually slapped with the label Horror Film. Of course it's just a matter of time before any word or concept gets watered down once advertisers get their hands on it, but still.

I could name-drop some examples of contemporary horror films unworthy of the name, but I think you already know what I'm talking about here. Movies that depend on the sudden slamming of doors in surround sound to deliver thrills. Or self-conscious, "ironic" pieces of shit that think they can transcend their fundamental badness by showing some awareness of same.

These things aren't scary. A film deserving of the h-word would be one that withholds more than it reveals; one that creeps up on you, not to say booo!, but to slowly steal its way into your head and haunt you forevermore. Its images skip right by your first few layers of mental processing and just make themselves at home in the same part of you where the desire to suckle your mother's breasts still resides. It will leave you with disturbing questions, the biggest being precisely what made the film so terrifying.

A film that matches the above description is Roman Polanski's Repulsion. I don't want to give away too much, since CINSSU is showing the film at Innis Town Hall, for free, on a beautiful 35mm print on October 18, just that the scene in which Catherine Deneuve's character finally unleashes it is one of the creepiest things I've ever seen. Shiiiiiver.

Repulsion is being shown with an extremely rare Roman Polanski short film. After the films there is a free live show by Friendly Rich and the Canadian All-Stars, a bizarre crew of incredibly talented musicians (including an amped harp player!) with a great sense of humour. And that my friend is what I call a Friday night extravaganza.



## One Man's View of Democracy

...continued from the front page.

the basis of my third paragraph; I assure you it all goes downhill from here.

Over the next couple of weeks, the ICSS will be selling lockers to Innis College students for five dollars for the entire school year. Stop by our office if you are interested. On October 9th, the Council of Student Government met with the President of the University of Toronto to discuss student issues. We encourage everyone to stop by our office or email us at [icss@hotmail.com](mailto:icss@hotmail.com) to find out what was discussed at this meeting and contribute your own point of view for the ICSS' attention. Finally, on October 31 st, the ICSS, along with the Innis Residence Council, will be running a Pub Night at the Innis College Café. In case you don't know, our Pub Nights are actually evenings when people debate about dead writers who have made significant contributions to Canadian literature. Actually, no, I fib again. Our pub nights are evenings when students are guaranteed to have a good time chilling, dancing, and doing

things our old high school principals would have disapproved. It is open to anyone over the age of five and we have suitable beverages for all ages (unless you want something like baby formula or Tang).

So that's it for our short-term plans. I hope that you will be involved in our long-term ones because we need your participation or else we damn well can't represent you. Hey, I think I'm getting the hang of this writing thing; perhaps the editors will let me stay on. In the meantime, stop by to see us if you have any questions and look for us in the same place in the next issue. We need your opinions! Our collective sense of self-worth is depending on it, world domination or not.

*EDITORS' NOTE: Though we may make fun of the mighty lentil, we must admit that it is packed full of goodness and other good things. Just like the ICSS.*

## Principal's Column

**Frank Cunningham introduces his new column.**

This Column aims to open a line of communication between the Principal (myself) and the College's students (or any other students who have the wisdom to be regular readers of the Herald). Why should I want to do this? Simply because I have less informal contact with our students than I wish.

What's in it for students? One consideration is that regarding almost any College matter, the buck stops with me. Another is that I know the University, its academic opportunities and obstacles and its labyrinthine structures very well: I was a student here and then from – get ready – 1967, a professor in the Philosophy Department.

The main reason is that I am situated at the boundaries among the College, the wider University, and the world outside of the University (yes, I am a professional academic who believes this world exists). Students should take advantage of their Principal's occupation of this location.

For example, the University's new Provost (Prof. Shirley Neuman) has initiated major planning about future directions of the University. Her own orientation includes commitments to improving the undergraduate experience, to equity, and to interdisciplinarity – all central College values. However, she will not be dictating a plan, but inviting campus-wide input. I can help to ensure that our voice is heard, but I need to know first-hand what the most pressing student concerns are.

Last year the College hosted a public forum on problems confronting the City of Toronto, ran an Understanding Islam film series, and organized a day-long workshop on the Asian-Canadian experience. Last week, we were hosting a film and dance show on how South Asian Kathak got to Spain and turned into Flamenco. Many of you must have ideas and contacts for more events,

which I can help to mount.

How can we communicate? Well, the door to my office (room 124a) is open. Also, I invite questions and suggestions sent me by e-mail ([fcunning@chass.utoronto.ca](mailto:fcunning@chass.utoronto.ca)), some of which I shall react to in future columns. Finally, as an experiment this term I shall undertake to be available in the Innis Café from 3:00 to 4:00 every Tuesday. I'll be the one with a tie carrying a copy of Aristotle's *Politics*.

## Where is our Green?

**ENSU supporter Manoja Wijewardene ponders the state of the Earth that future generations will inherit.**

Gaylord Nelson, former governor of Wisconsin and founder of Earth Day said, once said, "The ultimate test of man's conscience may be his willingness to sacrifice something today for future generations whose words of thanks will not be heard." As generations go by, the problems connected to the environment seem to become far worse than they initially seemed. As everybody knows, the problem of the degradation of the environment is not an isolated problem but truly a problem that branches out into many others.

These problems range from littering, ecological issues and global warming, to deforestation, nuclear power, toxics, and even human health. How can we stop this? Individuals, groups and organizations have been working together to answer this complicated question for years and most have done their best to make a difference and to save what is left of our Mother Nature.

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## Opinion

### In Defense of the Senate Stephen Hutchison plays defender.

No institution in Canada is so commonly derided as the Senate. The Senate, we are told, is unelected and unaccountable, a "democratic anomaly." Senators rarely even show up for work, and spend all their time in Mexico, collecting bloated pensions. The Senate is a bastion of patronage, lined with the Prime Minister's cronies. The Senate is a useless rubber stamp. Even John F. Kennedy, speaking to Parliament in the early 1960s, mocked the Canadian Senate as undemocratic. However, when one takes a deeper look at how the Senate functions on a practical level, one finds that the Senate is an institution of which all Canadians can be proud.

Admittedly, the Senate was founded with elitist intentions. The Senate was a group of wealthy friends of the British governor, entrusted with keeping an eye upon the elected members of the House of Commons. After all, it was felt that elected "colonials" might come up with crazy laws, and so they needed "sober second thought" to temper their wildness. Luckily for the evolution of our country, however, the Senate evolved after the 1840s. The role of the Senate today is to act as a "legislative editor" for the laws passed in the House of Commons. The Senate fine-tunes bills and helps to avoid substantive errors that can often occur in drafting legislation. The provincial governments lack respective Upper Houses, and a glaring result of this oversight is frequent errors in legislation. For example, the Ontario government's recent legislation to privatize Hydro One was fraught with technical and substantive errors that greatly complicated the privatization effort. A much older example from Ontario is the Racial Discrimination Act of 1944, a key piece of legislation by the Ontario government. This document was rendered useless by substantive errors. It can be said that similar errors are far less frequent in federal legislation and this can be at least partly attributed to the fine-tuning process provided by the Senate.

As for John F. Kennedy's comments, a look at the history of the American Senate shows that he ought not to be so smug. The American Senate has been plagued with fanatic partisanship to the obvious detriment of democracy in the United States. Some Senators are known to vote simply as a vengeful means of damaging a president of the opposite political stripes. Examples of this throughout American history are myriad, though perhaps no president was as damaged by senatorial partisanship as William Howard Taft. According to Lawrence Martin in his book *The Presidents and the Prime Ministers*, Taft managed to reach two trade agreements with Canadian Prime Minister Wilfrid Laurier. Martin asserts that the representatives of the Senate defeated the first agreement because they felt it would be too successful and make Taft "too popular." The Senate passed the other agreement allegedly because its members believed the agreement to be disadvantageous to the United States, and would therefore lower Taft's popularity. Whatever purpose James Madison and

### A First Year Guide to Pretense at U of T Paul Egan imparts the great theories of pretense to his fellow frosh.

In the spirit of higher learning, it seems proper to annotate an opinion pertaining to everyday academic life at such a venerable institution as this one, and have it published for other academics to digest and regurgitate. So it is that a 3-point program should be devised to encourage newcomers to this environment to partake in the immensity of this pretense that is collectively known to be Academia. As it has come to my attention that some first year students are quite well versed in this discipline, I will take this opportunity to draw attention to these individuals for the remainder of this treatise. With the latter mentioned, let us all take heed to the imminent enlightenment I shall bestow upon the world of education.

#### 1.1. "Know thyself."

Learn to love the sound of your own voice. This point cannot be stressed enough, as it is the sole purpose for opening your mouth. If you do not have an affirmed confidence, practise in front of your mirror. Researching this point, I noticed that to have a factual opinion means absolutely nothing when you can banter on with pure confidence. Refuse to feel inhibited by the intimidating atmosphere in which you may find yourself. Do not let your professor's ten-year education and formal research hinder you from enlightening the rest of the class (using class time to profess your own knowledge). We all need to know your opinion; we are dying for it. Regardless, do this for yourself. It is rather apparent that your inferences are incredibly more plausible than the actual conclusions that have been researched and documented and seem to be the consensus amongst most (i.e. everyone but you!).

Thomas Jefferson felt that an elected Senate would serve, these acts of brazen partisanship were clearly not it.

Also problematic in the United States is political deadlock between the Upper and Lower Houses, whereby different parties can control either House and choose to vote against each other, thereby preventing any legislation from passing. Jimmy Carter often found his administration paralyzed by this very type of political deadlock. In Canada, because Senators are not elected into office they are extremely cautious about using their powers. Senators realize the limitations of being appointed and therefore do not attempt to attack the elected Prime Minister over partisan machinations. The result is a Senate that works in conjunction with the House of Commons to perfect legislation, not to obfuscate it.

The accusation that the Senate is a bastion of patronage is difficult to resolve. However, though it may be difficult for political idealists to admit, patronage, when used properly, can be helpful to the working of good government. Award-winning historians Jack Granatstein and Norman Hillmer underline the importance of patronage in their book *Prime Ministers*. When explaining the

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#### 2.1. "Causation and movement"

Like Aristotle himself, refuse to sit idle while you expound your theories. Become an honorary member of the school of Peripatetics. Flail your arms about as though the Divine has inspired your passionate ranting. Through the basic laws of motion, you are sure to gain advantage over the inert. Remember to squint your eyes or refrain from opening them at all as you must give the appearance of searching the immense chasm that is the inner territory of your mind for the crucial information that you are delivering.

2.2. Enunciation is key as well. Be sure to elongate your vowels and speak slowly so that you may perfectly articulate what it is you feel needs be said. An example would be the pronunciation of just such a word: prooooooooo-nuhn-seeeeee-aaaaa-shuhhhnnnn.

#### 3.1. "Words. Words. Words."

If one is to venture into the realm of vocal lecturing, it is imperative that the correct, or even more commonly, incorrect diction be used to articulate your thoughts (or lack thereof). Polysyllabic words are the most appropriate in an academic setting. The larger the word used, the less likely it is that your opinion is to be refuted. Amaze people with the extensive vocabulary that luxuriates within the immensity that is your brain. Read the dictionary and refrain from perusing too much, just seek out the longest words. Once located, disregard the actual denotative meaning, as these archaic etymological interpretations of language are meaningless. Annotate these words to your liking and then use them out of context as much as possible. Should these words not suffice to your satisfaction, feel free to refer to your credentials as aspiring academic when you create your own, more precise vocabulary from the dictionary that is your mind (or the one lodged within your anus. You were going to do it once you got your degree anyway, right?). Examples of such words are 'tangentization' or 'synchronicity' (No joke!). Remember, if you display an aura of assurance, you are endorsed to elucidate a greater tutelage upon yourself and your compeers. I rest my case.

3.2. You should also make occasion to demonstrate how cultured you are by using words from foreign languages out of context in your speech. In such instances, there is no possible way someone can counter you (how could they if they don't know the language. Just don't let on that you don't either!). Such terminology as 'a propos', 'au lieu' and 'vis a vis' are perfect examples. Use these in the next conversation you partake in and witness your interlocutor be dumbfounded with your overwhelming intellect.

So now that the great theories of pretense have been bestowed upon you, use them liberally! You'll feel right at home here in the heaven that is the University of Toronto. Snub your nose with pride as you may now revel in the fact that you are indeed a genius. Or at least you will be in your mind if you keep telling yourself that.



## Takers and Leavers, Thinkers and Doers

Steven Jug explores the college's critical concept.

Radical seems to be one of those words people frequently use, but cannot actually define when forced to do so. Although the word can be defined in a sentence, it should be more helpful to curious readers to explore the concept broadly, with emphasis on how it can relate to social perception and personal behaviour. It seems necessary to briefly state that the concept of radical does not involve reading certain authors, studying certain subjects, or using a certain type of jargon.

To begin, being radical means questioning assumptions. These assumptions range from expansive to explicit, governmental to existential, profound to trivial. Assumptions take the place of explanations for those who make them, and mask the ignorance of those who accept them. Readers may ask what assumptions a radical questions, and how that makes her act or think differently than non-radical people. These questions obviously vary according to each radical individual, but there are general questions about civilization, society, culture, the political system, and the economy that radicals frequently ask.

The first assumptions to question are those about everyday life, and supposedly natural behaviour. Do people really naturally want to buy things? If they do, then why are people surrounded with and mentally bombarded with advertising? Does consuming really make people happy? Is it worth all the time people spend working at jobs that make them unhappy? Rejecting these and related assumptions can fundamentally alter a person's reaction to advertising and the omnipresent cult of consumption.

Related to these questions are those about the media. Does the media present a value-neutral assessment of events? Does it avoid serving the interests of those who control it, corporations? Does it present more than a series of minor variations on the same basic positions? Does it present a variety of perspectives? To simply ask these questions about the supposed basis of our democracy, let alone accept the answer to be negative for all of the above questions, is radical. Accepting the reality that "no" is the answer to these questions is of course something for the reader to do only after she has thought about them and determined that she has no basis for answering "yes".

The above should provide some preliminary basis for individuals to question their perception of society, and their misunderstanding of various events and relationships therein. Assumptions regarding personal behaviour remain, and ultimately relate to the various coercive institutions in society, the media among them. Do I really behave like an individual? Does advertising have no effect on me? Do I need to care about music or clothing or people that advertising companies want me to care about? If these are really worth caring about, why do advertisements constantly remind me to buy certain products, or watch certain shows? Am I paying more attention to what I look like than who I am? Do I realize that what wearing clothing that thousands of other people in

the city also wear doesn't really express who I am? If advertising doesn't affect me, do I look, talk, and act like the people it does affect?

These questions may be somewhat overwhelming, so a person can broadly ask herself: if everyone were like me, would anything change? Beyond the superficial, would society be any different? Would people live differently, or would they live as they did before, only with an increased uniformity of product preferences? If everyone lived like the author, this society would be radically different. Most people cannot honestly make the same contention.

Finally, questioning of assumptions can be taken to something approaching an extreme, which many radicals cannot accept, and which may alienate those fearful of leaving the blissful confines of conformity. Challenging assumptions about civilization, those probably least frequently questioned, demonstrates the perception-altering nature of radicalism. Has the growth and development of civilization benefited humanity? Do people benefit as civilization develops? Does civilization serve humanity or does humanity serve civilization? Have all the advances in science and engineering solved more problems than they have created? Do the advances make people happier? Does civilization promote the positive aspects of human behaviour? Is civilization really superior to previous modes of human existence? Does it best ensure that people live happy and fulfilling lives? Does humanity have some inherent right to use the planet and everything on it without limit for the advancement of civilization?

There are those who may accept the fact that these assumptions are invalid, but condemn radicals for not providing a ready-made alternative. Such people need to understand that the whole point of questioning assumptions and rejecting their falseness is to begin to create something new. Cultural change is essential for social, economic, and political change brought about by the people. Until people stop behaving according to their conditioning, the conformist tendency in our society will continue to keep the corpse of the status quo from rotting. These assumptions block our perception of what is really around us, just as a blindfold inhibits vision. Until humanity removes the blindfold, until humanity rejects the assumptions, it will not see the decay that surrounds civilization. The number of questions people do not think to ask is quite numerous, as the above series demonstrate. People are trained to respond to the above as they would if asked if the sky is blue. They are questions people do not want to ask because they often cannot answer, or do not like the answer they are capable of producing. Enter the radical, who over time comes to reject the assumptions with which society conditions her, and comes to accept that the honest answer to all of the above questions is no. To accept the reality such realizations beget is obviously next to impossible for most readers, but demonstrates, in however extreme a manner, the difference between radical and conformist thinking.

## In Defense of the Senate

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political success of John A. Macdonald, Granatstein and Hillmer admit that "Judicious use of patronage was the key to governing an intractable nation." Through patronage, the Prime Minister is able to conciliate the plethora of hostile special interests that dominate the Canadian political landscape. Naturally, when used to excess, patronage can cause a breakdown of government and disillusionment of the electorate. The key, it seems, is to use patronage in correct moderation so as to insure a stable, functioning government. It is also worth noting that the Senate is far from the only place where patronage appointments occur.

There is one more important role that the Senate serves. In his article "Three Paradoxes of Democracy", Larry Diamond discusses an inherent contradiction in democracy that he calls "consent versus effectiveness." The crux of Diamond's argument is that the need to pander to popular support for initiatives can sometimes lead to governments that are unwilling to take daring stands on important issues. In Canada, we have seen repeated examples of this cowardice occurring. The government has thus far refused to tackle sticky issues such as same-sex marriage, assisted suicide, and marijuana, instead choosing to defer decision-making power to the judiciary. As Toronto Star reporter Chantal Hebert astutely pointed out in a recent column, an unelected Senate has the freedom to make daring recommendations in a time when elected government is indolent. A Senatorial committee's progressive recommendation to legalize marijuana is perfect evidence of the positive role that the Senate can play in Canadian society. Had the Senate been elected, it is likely that the issue of marijuana would simply have been avoided altogether. During the rush to implement anti-terrorist legislation, a senate committee strongly recommended a sunset clause to limit the power of Bill C-36. Given how expansive the powers of Bill C-36 turned out to be, and how damaging its effects could be upon minorities, the Senate's recommendation proved in retrospect to be wise indeed. Also, while members of parliament took the summer off, Senatorial committees spent the summer months debating and researching issues. Moreover, the addition of a political institution with the freedom to espouse daring policy ideas helps to relieve Diamond's "consent versus effectiveness" problem. The Senate can address issues that would otherwise be politically disadvantageous to address.

Clearly, the Senate is not as desperately in need of reform as some would suggest. The Senate not only plays a key role in refining and editing legislation, it also avoids the political deadlock incurred by partisanship and allows for the discussion of issues that would otherwise not even be addressed. Though it is true that the Senate can be a haven of patronage, there is strong evidence that, when used in moderation, patronage can be beneficial to the strong governing of a nation. Hopefully, Canadians can learn to appreciate their most maligned political institution.



## Silly NPI, Politics are for Grown Ups

Dan Hoyer talks tough on the new Left.

For those of you who don't know, between the 18th and 20th of October the NPI (New Politics Initiative) will be holding its first-ever national conference on Parliament Hill in Ottawa. For the fledgling, hard-left, pseudo-political party that is the NPI, this conference could very well mark a major step in their development, could spark a dynamic flux of national support, could change the very nature of representative democracy as we know it, could propel the NPI towards becoming an actual party – or (as is most likely) it might be a three-day-long orgy of political conceit and ineffectual verbal masturbation; which is how most of their local meetings go.

Not to be melodramatic or anything, I just wanted to make a point. The NPI is actually a very admirable and innovative organization – in theory. They are a group of Leftist individuals, mostly disenchanting NDP-ers (like myself) who want to see the emergence of a strong Leftist party in Canada devoted to democracy and the overall betterment of Canadian-kind; social, environmental, and otherwise. They are particularly stringent advocates of "participatory democracy"; namely, an increased role for the private citizen in public policy and politics in general. Some NPI advocates are concerned with promoting empowered and active youth citizens, others more with democratic fiscal reforms, such as more government control over the national banks and borrowing policy (for example, no-interest loans from the Bank of Canada to the Government of Canada, thus relieving an enormous debt-cycle that the government accrues by borrowing money from itself at interest).

Fundamentally, though, the members and supporters of the NPI are concerned with expanding participatory democracy in Canada, hopefully to the final demise of our antiquated "representative" democracy. The main problem that I see is that the actual members of the NPI are self-interested, inexperienced, political incompetents who all suffer from near-paralyzing delusions of grandeur.

I became involved with the NPI early last year, and attended many of their monthly meetings held in dingy, downtown factory basements. What I observed is that this motley crew of activist-wannabees would gather for three hours and spew out a series of random, unconnected aphorisms while, at the same time, congratulating themselves on leading the last great socialist-democratic charge against the embattled spires of capitalism. The meetings had no sense of organization (helped in no part by the strict concept of disallowing any sense of hierarchical structure), the speeches failed to deal in any pragmatic way with any actual issue, and each point made was followed (after a series of vigorous head-nodding) by a complete change of subject, thus destroying any flow or dialectic that might have been accidentally established.

To elucidate the situation with a familiar example, I propose that the NPI is like a student living in residence who has never before lived on his own. A university residence provides a safe,

comfortable, placid, and uneventful environment. A student can read, write, and memorize as much theoretical babble as he can handle, without having to stress over anything else (except, perhaps, from where the next one-night-stand will come). The residence student, however, in exchange for this security, must give up any advancement in his life or character – in short, he must be suspended in an under-developed state. He is neither forced to make any meaningful decisions, nor is he forced to take on any responsibility for himself because the residence provides for everything. He is not being forced to make any of the decisions that would allow him to grow as a person and give definition to his life. Living in residence is simply living under the care of your parents, but with more alcohol.

The NPI, then, is like the residence student in that it is an organization full of the politically inexperienced students who, although full of great

theoretical maxims, are completely ineffective and inept at creating any sort of pragmatic solutions to real-life problems. They haven't been outside of their dingy, downtown factory basements long enough to have had to make any real-life decisions, and, as such, have no sense of direction, method, or practicality.

So on October 18th, although I do sincerely hope that the NPI might "move out on its own" in Ottawa and develop some real-world skills, I am dubious at best. But all hope is not lost just yet; someday a grown-up socialist-democratic-reformist party will emerge in Canada, one that lives in an apartment above a Pizza-Pizza on Dundas and is capable of solving actual problems. I will continue to keep the faith that we will be there to support it, help it grow, and watch it become corrupt and sell out, like good grown-ups are supposed to do.

## The Legitimacy of On-campus Cults.

Jared Michael Bryer questions the limits of freedom.

I haven't been at university for any length of time, but I am already finding something very surprising in the organization of groups within the campus. As soon as I got here, the Dean of Students warned me to be careful about getting involved in on-campus cults. Where I come from (Burlington, Ontario), the idea of a cult existed only in news articles about people in the States, like the Heaven's Gate incident in 1997, and from an episode of *The Simpsons*. The very notion that a cult could be a real concern was laughable before I came here. Now I'm finding that I have lived a sheltered existence, without realizing that these groups could actually manifest themselves within my tiny world. My roommate even claims to have seen a group of people walking around campus handing out flyers, while wearing t-shirts with some insignia on the front, and the slogan "Come die with us" imprinted on the back. This is not normal behavior. My main concern is that these groups are allowed to exist without being stopped by officials from the University.

I've always been in favour of rights and freedoms, as long as they are not detrimental to society. These groups undoubtedly believe that they should be given the freedom to practice their religion, but this is an absurd notion. I find it appalling that they could possibly assume that they deserve that level of legitimacy. Freedom of religion should not be a shield by which deviant groups mask their negative influence on society. But this is probably the most extreme case that I've seen so far.

The truly unfortunate thing is that many of the Colleges allow similar, cult like behavior. Twice in the past month members of Trinity College have marched into the backyard of my residence shouting inane slogans and traipsing about like bizarre mental patients.

The first time was some sort of militaristic rally

that ended in the Trinity students filling our fountain with chicken heads. I could let this go, though. Perhaps it was all just an elaborate (but misguided) prank. However, the second time was not so easily forgotten.

A large congregation of students in black robes assembled in our courtyard, began yelling at the top of their lungs, and ran around brandishing a large standard with some sort of crest at its top. The leader of this march wore a long red cape and wore a tall, pointed white hood. One of my fellow residents commented that he expected them to start burning crosses at any moment. Is this acceptable behavior that a college should be allowing? Maybe it is because of Trinity's background as a religiously based school that its students are allowed to express themselves in loud, obnoxious ways. If this is the case, religious freedom has been taken too far. It was originally intended to be a protection of personal practices, not a free-pass to congregate and march against other people, to show them how much better you are because of your faith. I don't mean in any way to generalize and say that every student from Trinity College is one of the people involved in these actions. I happen to think that the morals of an organized religion can help people to better society and themselves, and that one branch group is not a representation of the whole College's views or practices. It's the extremists that cause this sort of activity, and they are the same sort of extremists that form cults under the blanket protection of having been once involved in a legitimate faith. It is these same extremists that can end up being the ones passing out flyers and printing strange slogans on their shirts. These kinds of actions take the legitimacy away from their beliefs and cause me to think that, in the end, they are no better than the groups we were warned about in the beginning.



## Riding the Blue Crest.

**It's predictable and it's fluff but it is still worth the ride.**

by Amy Yu

*Blue Crush*'s advertising campaign may have caused many people to dub it and dismiss it as a "surfer chick" flick. To my surprise, however, this movie proved to be more than just booty and blondes. The awesome shots of the California surf and the showcasing of the athletic talents of the surfers redefined *Crush* as more than fluff and surfing as more than a sport. This movie is a biography of a lifestyle. After watching *Blue Crush*, you will definitely want to throw on your Billabong board shorts (from the company that successfully ran a full campaign throughout the film) and, well, hit the waves.

Sure, this movie has its predictable storyline, beautiful girls, and gratuitous surf shots but it is, for

the most part, is bearable. The plot is nothing spectacular but does provide some decent entertainment: Poor surfer girl with lots of talent has surfer girlfriends who dislike native surfer boys. Said surfer girl enters international surfing competition to win money to alleviate her "poor surfer girl" situation but winds up meeting a pro NFL football player and falls in love in between. The actors, for the most part, got by with humour that could only be described as cliché. My guy friend, however, begged to differ. Apparently the "girl power" motif was too much for him to bear. However, he did agree that the gorgeous setting of Hawaiian beaches distracted him from the humdrum plot.

Being a female in my (sniff, sniff) last teenage

year, I found *Blue Crush* to be a typical girl-friendly film that would be entertaining on any dreary Toronto day. Not only did it fulfill my Abercrombie and Fitch fantasies, but it also proved that, yes, "chick flicks" are mostly predictable but they can also be fun.

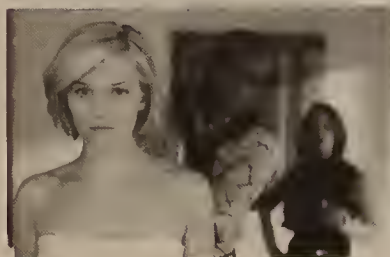


## Lynyrd Skynyrd Never Wanted it this Way

**Steffi Daft watches Reese comes to pieces in *Sweet Home Alabama***

Apparently there was one good line in *Sweet Home Alabama* but I am unable to remember it. It is sad and rather indicative that everyone fondly recalls a moment from this movie but cannot remember the exact verbatim. Alabama, in fact, is full of so many clichés that I swore that I had seen it before, only done better. If I had thought that this one line was funny, it was soon eclipsed by the recognition that I had probably heard it elsewhere prior to the showing.

In this alleged romantic comedy, Reese Witherspoon plays a fashion designer named Melanie who comes home to Alabama from New York City to secure a divorce from a long-forgotten husband whom she had left years before. One has to wonder why it took the impetus of an impending new engagement to inspire ole Mel to actually finalize her separation. In any case, she comes home only to find that her husband is even more attractive and kind and has forged a business out of a fond childhood memory. Try as she might to reject them, soon her kooky Southern parents have needed their way back into her heart with their Deep South mannerisms and her old friends have thrust themselves and their mullet-topped babies into her good graces again. Her New York world then starts to intrude and Mel has to choose what kind of future she really wants. See Alabama if you care what happens to Reese or simply gag now.



## Ivy League Failure

**For Kitana Ananda, *Stealing Harvard* fails to live up to comedic promise.**

What if your fiancée submitted a bid for a new home, tying up every last cent of your joint savings, on the very same day your favourite niece, newly admitted to Harvard, reminds you of a long-forgotten promise to pay for her college education? Remember, she's counting on you. What would you do?

This is the perfunctory premise of *Stealing Harvard*, a new comedy starring Jason Lee (*Mallrats*, *Almost Famous*) and directed by Bruce McCulloch (*Dog Park*, *Superstar*).

Despite Lee's leading man role as John Plummer, a hapless aspiring yuppie engaged to neurotic Elaine (Leslie Mann), Tom Green literally steals the screen – screentime, that is – as John's half-baked sidekick, Duff. Together, the two bungle through a series of farcical schemes to steal \$30,000 for John's hard-up niece, Noreen (Tammy Blanchard).

The film's uneven jokes range from quirky one-liners and visual references clearly shaped by director McCulloch's previous stage and screen work (most notably, as a member of brilliant Canadian comedy troupe, Kids in the Hall) to painfully prosaic orifice-based fixations. Oh, the hilarity abounds as Duff sticks an excessively uptight police detective's "special toothbrush" into his mouth! This shock-humour dominates the film and may appeal to some Green fans, although you wouldn't know it from the lackluster response at an opening-day screening. If this is comedy, the laughs are too few and far between.

I may be alone on this one, but Dennis Farina in a dress isn't exactly the zenith of comedic excellence.

Performances vary, as the actors are forced to make do with a meager script. Mann ultimately grates with Elaine's one-dimensional character, while Green's overwrought antics, punctuated by a series of maniacal hand gestures, feel forced and tiresome. On the other hand, solid performances from Lee and Megan Mullally, as John's sister, allow for a few warm moments in the film.

In the end, all narrative strings are neatly tied up with an economical Hollywood resolution, as boy decks future Dad-in-law, gets the girl, plays the odds, and becomes the hero.

Sorry, folks, but the film is as uninspired as my closing words: Try as it might, *Stealing Harvard* doesn't make the grade.



**Majestic Nights: November 7 and 26**

Call for submissions

If you have a film that is less than 15 minutes long and you'd like to show it at Innis Town Hall, then you are encouraged to submit your work as part of the Majestic Nights festival. For guidelines and guidance, please contact [james.king5@sympatico.ca](mailto:james.king5@sympatico.ca)



## Editorial: Post-Festival Reviewing Frenzy

### Innis film writers address the effects of film on conscious life.

by Laura Bil

The Toronto International Film Festival opens up our screens every year to the not yet seen, and not yet fully commercialised products, of our global cultural life. During TIFF, we usually go to see a film because we have heard something or we've read a line or two in NOW Magazine. We may be the only person we know who will see this film. The juxtaposition of one film against another in a crammed 10-day schedule may leave us with insights we might not have had in our regular stream of life. All of this results to a need for discussion.

To broadcast in print our reflections and our gleanings from the films, addresses part of the film festival we don't generally get to see - the raised

consciousness that carries on in our own personal worlds for months after the festival listings have been thrown away.

Going to festivals inspires a lot of discussion at the time too, whether with directors and actors or with other film-goers in line-ups, as we wonder what to see next or inquire about what we have missed. At our own Innis-based Planet In Focus Environmental Film and Video Festival, ample time was allotted after each film to actively encourage discussion.

Watching films can help to bring gems of inspiration or insight to the surface, and in this section, Innis film writers have attempted to capture some of these in their post-festival

reviewing frenzy.

Our relationship to watching and interpretation shapes so much of our lives, that seeing movies and critiquing them seems like a yogic practice. Moreover, this practice has become more and more necessary as we attempt to sift through the heap of signs and signals with which the global village bombards us everyday. I watch movies because they inspire me to think in images, colours and feelings in juxtaposition, and to pay attention to the abstract nature of my personal and extended universes.

I hope this issue leaves you with a few questions to pursue, including: what is the nature of film and how does it affect me?

## TIFF Unbound

**Natalie O'Brien, Andrew Colgoni, Chad Dembski, Ahreum M. Han, Felicia Migliore, Paul Monticone and Sean Rogers get down and dirty in their assessments of the Toronto International Film Festival offerings.**

11'09'01"

Various, 2002,  
Various



A film with eleven directors, with each director's segment filling 11 minutes, 9 seconds and one frame - all with one theme: the events on September 11th 2001. Eleven directors were chosen from eleven different countries and were obviously chosen for their diverse visions. And vision is what you get with this shocking, funny, heart breaking, beautiful film that explores many angles of this complex and confusing event. We start with a children's school class in Iran where a female teacher is trying to tell her rowdy large class about the events. The closest metaphor she can find to the WTC is a large smoke stack. She takes the children outside and shows them one, but the children are still confused. In the second film a deaf woman from France is saying good-bye to her American lover before he goes off to work. He is a tour guide for the deaf at The World Trade Centre. The segment ends with his tearful return. 11'09'01" also takes us to Israel, where a car bombing that morning is making news but is interrupted by the news in America. The woman reporter screams into the camera about all the past world events that have transpired on September 11th. In Ken Loach's moving drama, a Chilean man writes a letter to the families of victims of September 11th. He explains that he can sympathize with them: his country was terrorised by American trained forces in the early '70s. He carefully recounts how a dictatorship was put into place instead of the people's democratic choice. He is still unable to return to Chile - his place of birth. From Mexico comes a haunting video montage of people jumping from the World Trade Centre to the sounds of multi-layered audio tracks of cell phone calls, news reporters, sirens, and screams. Then, slowly, gorgeous choral music

blasts into the theatre and the words "DOES GOD'S LOVE BLIND US OR GUIDE US?" fill the screen. For once, I felt I was given the opportunity to make my own opinions about this event and reflect on the many people and cultures that were affected by the events of that momentous day. CD.

ALIVE

Ryuhei Kitamura, 2002, Japan/subtitled

Man, was I disappointed with this film! During the opening sequence, I looked over to my girlfriend and said, "This looks like a video game. Cool!" Yes, when a movie looks like a video game, it registers as a good thing to me. But then, unfortunately, Kitamura unleashes his ham-sized fist and beats this film to a bloody pulp. The middle part of this movie is as slow as your mama is fat, and by the time the end rolls around, it's clear that Kitamura has run out of money for effects, so he fashions the bad guy out of parts he picked up at Home Depot\*. Sad. AC.

ANTWONE FISHER

Denzel Washington, 2002, USA/English

A MOR\*, typical-Hollywood, middling, heart-warming tale. I hate MOR, typical-Hollywood, middling, heart-warming tales. On top of that, the story is so hackneyed (even if it is true) that I feel like I've seen this movie a million times before. Derek Luke, who plays Antwone, should go far in this biz, as he does a good job. If this is the best Denzel can do, however, he'd best stay in front of the camera. (\*MOR = middle-of-the-road. Read: I love EZ-rock). AC.

AUTO FOCUS

Paul Schrader, 2002, USA/English

A bio-pic about the rise and fall of TV's Colonel Hogan, Bob Crane (Greg Kinnear). Willem Dafoe

plays "Carp," the vehicle of Crane's self-destruction, and is (surprise) pretty creepy and pathetic. Schrader's loosely structured film follows their adventures - promiscuous sex on the dinner theater circuit, constantly relived through primitive home videos. It's hard not to wish that the film was more about the technology than it actually is - in a young Ego's hands, Auto Focus could've been great. In Schrader's hands, some scenes are vividly rendered - such as Crane and Carpy discussing a hotel room's décor while masturbating to one of their videos - but there's a respect for the subject matter that precludes effective storytelling. Instead of providing a thematically satisfying ending, Schrader simply solves Crane's murder. At its best, however, Schrader uses the story to examine the various dynamics of two men's vaguely homosexual relationship as compellingly as he examined father-son relationships in his previous film, Affliction. PM.

BOWLING FOR COLUMBINE

Michael Moore, 2002, USA/English



This is a Michael Moore film. That should really be enough to make you want to see it. Bowling for Columbine shows Moore as a more refined filmmaker, with the effect being a glossier, sharper movie (also probably the result of having more money to work with). That said, it does ramble a little, which I like, but some might see as a lack of focus. Unlike Moore's previous films (Roger and Me, 1989, The Big One, 1997), which are each extremely sad and tragic for their own reasons, I actually cried in this one. My favourite of the fest. (And if Moore doesn't end up losing some weight soon, he'll end up being a martyr for the cause. Watch the trailer here: <http://www.bowlingforcolumbine.com/AC>.



**GERRY**

Gus Van Sant, 2001,  
USA/English



Two guys named Gerry get on a nature trail but they decide to scrap the hike, and end up barreling across the desert. And that's it, that's all we get, is the desert, absurd and laconic dialogue — and a very fine film. Van Sant's MO of blatant swipes from other directors (remember *Psycho*?) here continues unabated, but in this case, as with the Welles' references in *My Own Private Idaho*, I didn't mind all that much. The purloined aesthetic, the press kit assures us, is that of Tarr, Kiarostami, Akerman, Tarkovsky, et al., where landscape and shot duration take precedence over, well, everything. It's an influence I wish more American filmmakers would pick up on, rather than turning for the billionth time to Hong Kong gangster movies, and for that reason alone, although there are indeed many others, *Gerry* is a must-see. SR

**THE GOOD THIEF**

Neil Jordan, 2002, Ireland/English

If the fact that Nick Nolte admitted to trying heroin to get "a taste for it" in preparation for his part in this film, was subsequently arrested for driving extremely intoxicated only days later, and then checked-in to a drug-rehab centre shortly thereafter doesn't get you at least interested in this film, then keep in mind that Nolte is brilliant (in all his Tom Waits gruffness) and Jordan captures the bright, seedy underside of Paris in a way that is absolutely mesmerizing. I was slow to warm up to this film, but by the end, it had me convinced. "Hm, I wonder what heroin tastes like....?" (P.S. Includes an extremely happy ending, which I didn't find suffocating and nauseating, in contrast to the sickness I experience at Spielberg-type endings). AC.

**HEAVEN**

Tom Tykwer, 2002,  
Germany/Italian/English



Tom Tykwer's *Heaven* and Steven Spielberg's *A.I.* have this much in common: they're both a commercial director's attempt to film a project left behind by a deceased cinema great. Spielberg on Kubrick wasn't a successful collaboration, but it was compelling because of the tension between filmmakers' disparate philosophies. *Heaven*, based on a script by Krzysztof Kieslowski, isn't as interesting. The story - Philippa, a widowed schoolteacher in Italy (Cate Blanchett), botches her attempt on the life of a drug kingpin, killing four innocent civilians - would've been perfect for Kieslowski's subversively apolitical temperament, and this side of Kieslowski is still in the structure of the film. The second half of the film abandons the potentially political subject matter (terrorism, police corruption) altogether. The translator at Philippa's interrogation, Filippo (Giovanni Ribisi), falls in love with her and they escape together to Tuscany. This, the heart of Kieslowski's script, is

the point where Tykwer gets lost. He slips into tourist mode and tries to depict Philippa's guilt and the couple's love in long shots, admiring Tuscany's landscape instead pointing his camera where it's most needed: at his actors. PM.

**KEN PARK**

Larry Clark and Ed Lachman, 2002, USA/  
Netherlands/France

Don't believe what the pretentious types tell you; this film is not revolutionary or even groundbreaking. In fact, it's been done better before: like in any porn film. Larry Clark seems to have lost the art of making a point or even being poignant. He thinks *Ken Park* says something about teenage suicide. There is about two minutes about it in the film, and those two minutes do nothing but show a kid killing himself. He also thinks showing a kid fucking his girlfriend's mother tells us something about the relationship between teens and parents. I think it proves that Larry Clark and his shock-value-only cinema just doesn't cut it anymore. Well, at least the acting's good. AC.



In boring Visalia CA, four teenaged skate punks have shitty parents and lots of sex.

Co-director Clark and screenwriter Harmony Korine are treading familiar ground here, but in an often more thoughtful and less "realistic" manner than was apparent in *Kids* — the polish, in this instance, is perhaps a contribution of star cinematographer (*The Limey*) and co-director Lachman. After a gruesome prologue, titles introduce the four friends and the film's tight structure: the sequences focusing on a young man named Tate (James Ransone) are the film's most thrilling moments, jaw dropping in their angry audacity and even approaching brilliance. Here, Ransone's performance and the directors' image-making feel equally inspired, and remain all too indelible. But it is the ecstatic, ahem, "climax" of the film, already infamous, that redeems the other segments from their frequent tendency toward extremity and ridicule for their own sakes. SR.

**HORNS AND HALOS**

Michael Galinsky,  
2002, USA/English



A doc about the trials and tribulations involved with the publishing of *Fortunate Son*, an unofficial biography about George W. Bush Jr. When the book was dropped by its initial "big-label" distributor, (after learning its author was a convicted felon) Soft Skull press, an indie publishing house, picked it up. The doc follows Arthur Hatfield, the author, and Sander Hicks, head of Soft Skull (and a really cool guy) as they deal with setback and misfortune and the mighty hand (and dollar) of GWB. An excellent movie and a really

tragic tale. After you watch it, come find me, and we'll talk conspiracy theories. Watch the trailer: <http://www.hornsandhalos.com/trailer/trailer.html>. AC.

**PUNCH-DRUNK LOVE**

PT Anderson, 2002,  
USA/English



This is the film I've been waiting for Adam Sandler to make. This might even be the movie I was waiting for PT Anderson to make. There is nothing really amazing about this film, but the solid performances and the charm of Sandler carry it through. The scene when Sandler's character finally loses it and beats the shit out of the bad guys is priceless, and the rest of it is pretty good too. Go see it, it's the Healthy Choice. (Read this first: <http://www.snopes2.com/business/deals/pudding.htm>) AC.

**SECRETARY**

Steve Shainberg,  
2002, USA/English



Can a film about S&M be sweet, whimsical, and even tender? Surprisingly enough: yes. The Secretary isn't designed just to titillate with risqué material. Instead, director Steven Shainberg uses a unique mix of humour, reality, romance and eroticism to get the viewer to re-examine their ideas of normality in love and lifestyle.

Maggie Gyllenhaal portrays Lee Holloway, a recently released mental patient, who deals with her dysfunctional family by cutting herself. Cue James Spader as Edward Grey, a lawyer with control issues. He hires her immediately and they begin games involving typos, a red felt pen and yes, spanking. Spader plays off his *sex, lies and videotape* persona perfectly with moments of supreme terror peeking from underneath a maniacally cool exterior. *The Secretary* works because it is obvious that he is just as entranced by Lee as she is with him.

Lee lives in a stunted childlike stasis, hiding her cutting kits among unicorns and purple barrettes but she becomes empowered and mature. She is willing to accept herself and this alternative way of loving without the conflict that haunts her boss. In a touching voiceover she confesses to the audience that "This kind of love feels right to me." She may be the one who is spanked or crawling, but her gaze tells us that his commands give her a freedom she relishes. She is shameless in her attempts to get what she wants. Previously we had only seen her want the sharp pleasure of a fresh cut under a baggy skirt.

When Spader's character withdraws, because of societal norms and his own fears, the film has reoriented whatever prejudices you came into the movie with until you want to shake him, tell him to wise up and get back to the spanking. Now, *that* is a date movie. NB.

reviews continued on page 13...



## Arts & Entertainment

### Are You Ready to Testify?

**In her second installment of *Moving Away From the Pulsebeat*, columnist Vanessa Meadu explores the underground legend of Detroit rockers, MC5.**

My experience this year at the Toronto International Film Festival was lame, at best. The two-week movie bonanza was characterized by fire alarms, plotless disasters, films that wouldn't end and, oh, did I mention films that wouldn't end? The one rough gemstone that stood out among the cinematic misfortunes that I saw was a teeny independent documentary called "MC5—A True Testimonial," a film that not only blew me away with the quality of its content, but with its fascinating subject matter, the MC5.

Back when the Beatles were clean cut, and the Beach Boys still sang about beaches, Detroit's MC5 started doing something altogether different. Their rough-rock style emerged from various psychedelic and hippie roots, and combined the kind of political hue and drug-addled anger that rightfully gave the band the honour of being the first "true" punk band. Yes, forget everything you've heard about the Sex Pistols (manufactured) and The Clash (hello, ska?), the MC5 were IT. They mentored Iggy and the Stooges, rocked before the Ramones, and defined swagger way before any Limp Bizkits or Ritalin popping teens broke the scene.

In typical festival fashion, director David C. Thomas got up to introduce his film in front of a mostly packed theatre at the Cumberland. His speech, however, was less a wearisome "thank the sponsors" than a rousing call to arms, uniting "mods and rockers, hippies and beatnuts" alike to stand up and preserve the memory of the MC5. "The reason we made this film was because it was one we wanted to see. Nobody else would do it," announced Thomas, indicating his own personal stake in the venture. The film tracks the story of the band from early days in Lincoln Park, MI through the late 60's and their affiliation with the lesser-known White Panthers, until their sad and reckless demise in 1972. Shot completely on digital camcorders, Thomas went up-close and personal with surviving band members (Wayne Kramer, Michael Davis, and Dennis Thomson), and combined his fresh footage with old interview footage of vocalist Rob Tyner and guitarist Fred "Sonic" Smith. Interspersed with grainy yet gorgeous archival live material, MC5—A True Testimonial shows rock at its greatest, searing, sweaty glory.

What Thomas has done is remarkable not just for the complex and interwoven material, but simply because rockumentaries are hard to do right. VH1's "Behind The Music" tends to follow a boring formula, never quite doing justice to the band's memory, and always overemphasizing the 'dark side of success.' Thomas and his crew managed to avoid the cheesy testimonials (like the 6th grade Phys-Ed teacher's "Oh I always knew she was gonna be a star! I could see it in her 100 metre dash!") by going directly to the source and getting the truth from the band, who seem to have

tuned out to be pretty centred and intelligent individuals. And while it became clear to me in his introduction that Thomas was a rabid fan, the bias never slipped through into the film; he never glorified what wasn't worthwhile.

My own personal testimonial about the MC5 takes a more round-about route. As I was browsing through this year's Festival films, the name MC5 caught my eye due to a cover that Jeff Buckley had done of their famous "Kick Out The Jams." Buckley shattered his sensitive falsetto image by incorporating "Kick Out The Jams" into his live set around '95. Two amazing versions remain widely available, one in the 2001 album "Live à L'Olympia" (recorded in Paris in 1995) as well as his "Live In Chicago" video. As a Buckley junkie, I was frequently confused by the image of Jeff, sweaty and shirtless, encouraging the screaming crowd to "kick out the jams, motherfuckers!" I'd heard vague things about the MC5, but it was only after seeing A True Testimonial that I really got the gist of what Buckley was trying to memorialize. Frontman Rob Tyner, with his giant afro and leering smile, would send sparks flying at every show by roaring out this now-famous phrase

before playing the underground anthem. The band would invariably be carted away by local authorities after shows on charges such as disturbing the peace, corrupting the children or any number of useless accusations aimed just at shutting them up. This was definitely their call to arms, and Kick Out The Jams definitely symbolized a movement, a power struggle, and a tough ideology that the MC5 sought to maintain. They represented an alternative—an alternative to music, to politics, to lifestyle and to war. They were all substance, and everything else, their looks, their stage moves, their cursing, just came naturally as a result of a true and deep-rooted attitude.

The future of this film looks a little uncertain as of now, but I sincerely hope that it gets distributed in some shape or form. In the meantime, check out the production company's website [<http://www.futurenowfilms.com/>] for updates. I suggest the Toronto Film Festival ditch the useless arty and pretentious films for films of substance, documentaries such as this one, about subjects that matter. A True Testimonial moved me, and that's what counts in the end.

#### This Month's Kicks

(a Pulsebeat Concert Calendar in which we highlight some "can't miss" upcoming shows in T.O.)

- 05 October – Low and Mark Eitzel @ Lee's Palace
- 09 October – The Strokes (with Sloan!) @ ACC
- 13 October – The New Deal @ Kool Haus
- 15 October – Clinic (with Apples in Stereo!) @ Phoenix
- 15 October – Electroclash Tour" (with Peaches, Chicks on Speed, and more) @ Guvernment
- 16 October – Underworld @ Kool Haus
- 16 October – The Rolling Stones (with the White Stripes!) @ ACC
- 16 October – Amon Tobin, Bonobo and Prefuse 73 @ Phoenix
- 18 October – Rolling Stones (with No Doubt!) @ Sky Dome
- 20 October – Beck w/ Flaming Lips @ Massey Hall
- 27 October – Jurassic 5 @ Guvernment
- 30 October – Sigur Rós @ Massey Hall
- 31 October – Kid Koala @ Lee's Palace

### Pere Ubu...It's About Girls

**Paul Monticone delves into three decades of obscurity finally brought to light at Lee's Palace, September 22.**

Twenty-seven years ago, Pere Ubu surfaced with several singles and two albums—The Modern Dance and Dub Housing—which critics have frequently hailed as some of the most influential and/or best proto-punk recordings ever made. There's some difficulty in the cause-and-effect logic that underpins such praise: you can't hear Pere Ubu in any actual punk music the way that you can recognize strains of, say, MC5. Echoes of Pere Ubu's style—mangled blues and surf riffs, Beefheartian rhythms, caterwauling synths, and yelped, bleated, groaned, and otherwise-not-sung vocals—are heard mostly among post punk

bands, everyone from Mission of Burma to the Pixies.

Pere Ubu's resistance to being placed within a particular movement or genre may be the cause of their obscurity. To trace the point back further, this all may have something to do with being from the industrial wasteland and cultural black hole that is Cleveland, Ohio. At least kids in Jersey City can hop on the Turnpike and be in Manhattan in two hours. Outside of relevant space—too far from both Detroit and New York—and time—too late for the Stooges or the Velvet, too early for

continued on next page...



## Pere Ubu...It's About Girls

...continued from previous page.

No Wave—the band was free to indulge their avant-garde leanings while simultaneously aspiring to become The Beach Boys for a new millennium—or, at the very least, for cities with burning rivers in place of Pacific beaches. Try putting that on the cover of Rolling Stone.

Nearly three decades and eighteen albums—a label for everyone, just about—of the music world's indifference have given David Thomas, the band's enormous frontman—rock and roll's very own Orson Welles—plenty of time to think about his band's place within American music. This was evident as he lumbered up to the microphone; wearing a cowboy hat and swigging Remy Martin from a flask, Mr. Thomas invoked the road—singing as a travelling salesman, about roads, car radios, rivers and road-side diners.

The main set drew heavily from St. Arkansas, the band's new album, and the majority of the songs are in the same vein—Thomas assumes the voices of men driving nowhere, lost on the side of the road. That Thomas' lyrical subject matter has shifted from penguins and WWII air raids to more self-consciously rock n' roll themes and imagery reflects his interest in rock as folk art. If he's to belong to any artistic tradition, it's the one that can see Mark Twain and Bruce Springsteen in the same continuum.

Also in the main set, Pere Ubu resurrected a few of their older, more "difficult" tracks. The band's current line-up is well-suited to live performances of these songs; Steve Mehlmann's muscular, industrial drumming anchors the band's brand of "sonic terrorism"—Thomas' white-noise producing BBQ apron and Robert Wheeler's theremin solos never meander. "Dub Housing", their second album's spooky nightmare about living in a speaker, is transformed into an explosive, danceable rocker.

After a short encore break, the band returns to the stage, to the shouts of song titles—classic, oft-covered tracks like "Final Solution," "30 Seconds

Over Tokyo," "Nonalignment Pact." Thomas' glare takes in the entire room, and he chides us: "We're the band. We'll play what we want."

His annoyed sneer breaks as he sings in a thin and fragile cappella: "Oh, my friends don't understand me, and my wife begins to fear, that I've lost some sense of balance, and I've lost the will to live..." What's a man to do but hit the road? Drums crash in before falling into line behind the grinding bass-line and nearly subliminal guitar riff—Thomas chants his mantra-like refrain, "Oh the radio, AM radio, oh the radio will set you free". Keyboard splashes add colour as the nine-minute "Dark", St. Arkansas' suicide ride of a closer, unwinds, hypnotizing the listener into its groove. Finally Tom Hermann's guitar lurches to life—one distorted power-chord, tearing a hole in the side of Lee's straight down to the 401.

And Pere Ubu is off.

Well, nearly off. Thomas stays on another ten minutes, time enough to play "Nonalignment Pact"—the opening electronic howl of which sends one very happy man into a spastic fit of joy one might call dancing—and sign autographs. So there it is, even the custodian of the "avant-garage," proud member of the Brotherhood of the Unknown, can sometimes be a gracious rock star too.

When we have nothing clever left to say, we turn to the ever-popular Salman Rushdie. These prophetic writings appeared in a January, 2000 article, eerily foreshadowing the events of 09/11:

*"It is also alarming to think that the real battles of the new century may be fought in secret, between adversaries accountable to few of us, the one claiming to act on our behalf, the other hoping to scare us into submission."*

## "my on the road II - a year later"

by Olaf Brave

this haunted asphalt burns  
watching it melt by  
asks new questions  
it has answers to give

I stare out the window at the  
phonograph road  
its musical lines  
my mind sharpened to diamond  
needle pricks  
and oil stains

the string of white bars  
shimmer by  
each discarded like broken pearl  
pulsing their secret eternal rhythm

a single white statement  
driven to fluorescence by the Sun  
and phosphorescence by headlights  
keeps me grounded  
between the vibrating road  
and shimmering shoulder  
gravel and brush

slip away  
mere impression

a gaping mouth  
filled with mud  
wires bounce their dance  
the stories the concrete median guard  
must have to tell

the microwave towers  
make their presence known  
in the night

everything its whispered code  
secrets to tell  
but always silent

## ramblings on the mind

by Felipe Prusak

remember way back when,  
when the words came out in droves,  
the sounds,  
they knew what words i meant.

snap.

blink and end it altogether  
as quick as that and then it's gone.  
but please don't sink in your teeth in  
unless you can get hold

living in futures  
the way i've always been  
i'll end this incandescence  
and offer you the match.



by Ahreum Han



## The Play's in the Details

**Drama student and aspiring critic Tara Hirebet critiques the production of William Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, staged Sept 12-21 2002 at Hart House Theatre.**

### Background on Shakespearean language and style:

Shakespeare's plays are built on language which tells the actors everything they need to know to act their part, and tells the audience everything they need to know to follow the storyline and the acting. It is written in a rhythm called the "iambic pentameter." This means each line of the verse is ten syllables in length with an up and down rhythm of a strongly stressed word, then a weaker stressed word, a stronger stressed word and then a weaker stressed word and so on. In fact, this rhythm precisely reflects the natural ups and down of our everyday speech. By focusing on these emphasized words (the actor's job is to emphasize these words), we are able to grasp not only the storyline but often the class, age and gender of the character speaking, his/her unique vocal rhythms, and also the emotional state of the character at that moment. Moreover, when looking at the verse on a page, it seems like Shakespeare wants the actor to end the line every ten syllables because every he starts a new line on the page. In reality, he writes this way to allow the actor to easily see the rhythm of the speech. When speaking, however, the actor must notice Shakespeare's use of punctuation. Thoughts or sentences stop when the line stops, i.e. when there is a comma or period. As such, there should only be a pause in speech every few lines on the page. Learning to speak this iambic pentameter well makes the actor's inner character work much easier. The tendency today is to replace this steady precise rhythm with the rhythms

of modern speech. By doing this, however, meaning is often lost and the natural progression of the speech is destroyed.

### The Critique....

Hart House Alumnae's production of *Macbeth* was, in this critic's eyes, a balance of the very pros and cons that naturally come out of the limitations inherent in a North American theatre production. What do I mean by this? Amateur productions suffer from what one can call the "quick and simple standard." That is, they work with a smaller budget, a shorter rehearsal time, and actors displaying a variety of acting skills, and in the case of *Macbeth*, they are not often cultivated towards an accurate understanding and usage of the iambic rhythms of Shakespearean language. This linguistic flaw was evident in Hart House's production, particularly during the more "meaty" monologues and dialogues of Lady and Lord Macbeth. Often, actors did not keep to the Shakespearean strong/weak rhythm, and used modern varied expression, so the less important words were mistakenly given emphasis in most speeches. Additionally, some actors tended to stop at the end of each line, rather than where there was a period in the verse, and also tended to swallow the ends of lines, or raise it in question, as we often do in colloquial English. It thus became difficult to understand what the actors were saying, and at times confused parts of the storyline. All of these were understandable pitfalls, considering there was probably not enough rehearsal time to focus on the lan-

guage, but these were still flaws which hindered the overall result of the production.

Having said that, the director did make sure that what his actors didn't fully exploit linguistically, they made up for with hard character work that was supported technically by a traditional and clear production design. Set and costume design (Sherri Cat) were uncluttered, and worked together to convey only location, atmosphere, and characters' societal and thematic roles in the world of the play. Lady Macbeth for example, wore an emerald green robe, symbolic of her greedy and envious nature. Later, after the onset of her madness, her hair was wild and unbrushed, and she wore a long, translucent white nightgown making her appear like a floating spirit. This stylistic choice nicely complimented the use of make-up to give her a look of sickness and madness. The lighting design displayed similar characteristics. Green light was used to create the eerie atmosphere of the first scene with the witches, yellow for the oil-lamp castle interior, and red for the final scene when Macbeth's vanquished head is mounted onto a stake.

The most impressive facet of this production of *Macbeth* was the successful use of multiple levels within the stage space. In the first scene, the witches moved from a rock, to the roof of a cave that had been built on stage. Later, in the banquet scene, another level was added by placing the banquet table and the Macbeths' thrones on raised platforms. Finally, there were those magical moments in which the individual actors' and the company's character work came through very strongly, and in fact set the previously-flawed speech rhythms straight — a reflection of the actors' momentarily intense focus. Macbeth's, "We have scorched the snake not killed it," was beautifully delivered, with the fear, and anxiety of a first time murderer. Pip Dwyer should also be given honorary mention for her intense portrayal of Lady M's madness, which was most apparent when she could not rid her hands of the imaginary spot of blood. Her riveting performance captivated the audience, leading to a solid set of scenes throughout the second half of the performance.

As with any traditionally performed Shakespearean production, distractions kick in and the audience tends to tire — a result of the sheer heaviness and length of the storyline. It is thus noteworthy that the cast was able to maintain a high level of energy, focus and clarity despite the audiences' waning vibes. This group cohesion is perhaps one of the strongest marks of any amateur production, this one included, as it is one aspect often lost in the highly commercialized world of the professional, large scale theatre companies.

Overall, what the Hart House production lacked in scholarship they definitely made up for with a strong group rapport, shown in their personal enjoyment and charisma throughout the performance.

## Unchained Mann

**Kitana Ananda reviews the new Aimee Mann record, *Lost in Space*.**

It's an all too familiar question no artist wishes to hear.

"So... where's the single?"

After a plague of misfortune and several frustrating years bouncing between major labels in a hit-driven industry, Aimee Mann need not listen ever again.

Beloved by music fans and critics alike for her expertly-crafted songs, Mann's highly anticipated fourth album, *Lost in Space*, arrives on the heels of recent commercial success with the Grammy-nominated *Magnolia* soundtrack, and the independently-recorded *Bachelor No. 2*. The latter, wrenched from major label control with Mann's own personal savings, turned a newly liberated songwriter into a poster girl for the third millennium.

*Lost in Space* is her most cohesive and stylistically varied effort to date, even when compared to an impressive back catalogue spanning nearly two decades. Branded by some as a modern-day Karen Carpenter, Mann's captivating voice is uniquely her own, alternating between unshrinking, soulful strength and strained fragility.

Unlike *Bachelor No. 2*, with its Bacharach-

inspired pop melodies, *Lost in Space* delves into slightly darker territory. Denial, muteness, deception, addiction, and obsession are all themes that figure heavily in Mann's grand narrative. Clever epigrams like "Hate the sinner, but love the sin," and "The moth don't care if the flame ain't real/ 'Cause flame and moth got a sweetheart deal" provide a fresh twist on mawkish platitudes.

Adroit words aside, Mann's music clearly speaks for itself. Released through the SuperEgo Records/United Musicians imprint, songs are seamlessly enjoined yet markedly different, complimenting lyrics that unravel an aporia of profound emotions with their elegant simplicity. From the rootsy "High on Sunday 51" to the melancholic title track, or the joyously turbulent guitar-pop of "Pavlov's Bell," and sensual warmth of "The Moth," Mann taps into an emotive power that transcends genre. The quiet intimacy of "It's Not" displays this element of her work best, neatly bringing the album full circle with its chastened realization of isolation and unfulfilled desire.

At once subtle and impassioned, *Lost in Space* has something for everyone.



## Where is our Green?

...continued from page 3.

However, this is not nearly enough and the efforts made by a select few should influence the thoughts of all.

Though most people do not think that throwing just one chocolate wrapper on the ground is all that detrimental to the environment, they are most definitely wrong. If almost every person thought that, imagine how much garbage would collect up. If everybody increased their awareness, we could set an example in this generation, to encourage future generations to be more enthusiastic and willing to follow our lead. Just sacrificing one second of one's life to throw that chocolate wrapper in the garbage or to recycle a pop can could change everything and also inspire others to do the same. I am not saying this is as easy as it sounds but if one person starts then I am sure there will be a few along the way that follows.

There are many solutions to these vast problems related to the environment, such as clean production in industries, using safer alternatives to PVC plastic, buying PVC-free toys, chlorine-free paper, using safer alternatives to toxic solvent dry cleaning, etc. We face a human health epidemic of outstanding proportions: The incidence of childhood cancers increased by 10.2% between 1973 and 1991. One in every 400 children in America is expected to develop cancer before age 15 and also the likelihood of a woman developing breast cancer in her lifetime has increased from one in 20 to one in 8 between 1960 and 1999 in the U.S (Statistics taken from Greenpeace USA). We should help out in any way possible to save the environment, and follow the lead of the environmentalists of this generation, like those involved in Earth Day Canada, Greenpeace International, and Innis College's Environmental Students' Union (ENSU). We should show loyalty to our earth because it does bore and sustain us. This is our paradise; we should join together to help preserve it. I know that I am going to throw out my pop can but it is up to you to throw out your next candy wrapper.

## TIFF Unbound

...continued from page 8.

### SHOTTAS

Cess Silvera, 2002, USA/Jamaica, Jamaican patois/subtitled

Whoop boy, don't get me started on this one. A few things are clear upon viewing this film: Silvera is a mediocre director: he really, really wanted to make a shoot-'em-up, and a morality tale this isn't. Silvera adheres to the hoes, guns, and bling-bling style we know so well from rap videos. At the same time, he wants us to believe he's delivering a powerful message about life on the street, and how it's tough to grow up in Jamaica. In fact, all he's doing is reinforcing stereotypes and leaves us with no idea how people can escape the gangsta lifestyle (short of getting shot). Ky-mani Marley's (one of Bob's many sons) obvious talents are wasted on this, and Wyclef Jean proves once and for all that he's an idiot. AC.

### TAKE CARE OF MY CAT

Dir: Jae-eun Jeong,  
Starring Doo-na Bae,  
Yo-won Lee, Ji-young  
Ok - Korea, 2001



Korean cinema has been in the international film spotlight, gaining the recognition it deserves. Witness the recent film festivals around the world: at this year's Cannes, veteran filmmaker Kwon-Taek Im won the Best Director Prize for *Chihwaseon* and Chang-dong Lee, a virtual unknown, took the Special Director's Award at Venice for *Oasis*, which also collected the Marcello Mastroianni Award for its heroine So-ri Moon.

The Toronto International Film Festival is no stranger to this growing interest in Korean Cinema; over the years the festival has presented numerous Korean films. This year it featured ten in its National Cinema Programme including *Oasis*, and a gala presentation of *Chihwaseon*. One of the

featured films was *Take Care of My Cat*, an intelligent coming-of-age tale.

This film focuses on five friends who have just graduated from a high school in Incheon. Once best friends, they now find themselves drifting apart from each other as they deal with the ups and downs of life. Ambitious Hea-joo gets a job in a brokerage firm in Seoul, ready to climb the social ladder at the cost of friendship. But she finds herself running errands for others because she does not have a university degree. Her best friend, Ji-young, is an artistic and independent soul who dreams of studying textile design abroad; however, she is prevented by poverty from realizing her dream. Tae-hee is a chain-smoking daydreamer who volunteers to type the poetry of a disabled man as she quietly rages against the materialistic values of Korean bourgeois society. Bi-ryu and Ohn-jo are ever so cheerful Korean-born Chinese, even though their only income is from selling handmade trinkets. What binds these increasingly separate friends together is a stray cat which is handed from one to another as they move on to find their places in the world.

First time director-writer Jae-eun Jeong structures this story with comic and dramatic episodes, giving it an unhurried pace. This technique also invites the audience into the lives of these cat-like women; with certain coyness and vulnerability, they curiously look around for a place to hide their private thoughts and emotional turmoil from each other's scrutiny.

The idea of "transition" is the key to this film. As a port city, Incheon is forever "in transit". Modern Korea is also in a cultural flux, where traditional rice cakes and Dunkin' Donuts manage to co-exist comfortably. These women are in transition from adolescence to adulthood. In this "mobile" society they communicate through cell phones as they are riding the subway, taking the bus or going for a walk. Their reliance on cell phones also provides a delightful visual gimmick in the film as the text messages in the cells appear on the screen, crawling along the side of a building or the inside of a bus. There is also a witty four-way split screen as all five talk to each other on their cells.

Despite its insightful look at growing up, the film feels too long. In the last thirty minutes it loses its direction, and its naturalistic tone is diminished as the camera follows these women aimlessly. Bi-ryu and Ohn-jo ultimately seem underdeveloped even as comic relief. Luckily, the film regains its strength with the last scene, reminiscent of *The 400 Blows*. Ending with a slow motion freeze frame, Jeong gives her audience a world that is unresolved but forever in transit.

With its heartfelt and thoughtful storytelling *Take Care of My Cat* is proof that Korean cinema is experiencing a renaissance after the sexually explicit and violent films of the 1980s. In an echo of *Les Bonnes Femmes* and *Ghost World*, *Take Care of My Cat* is a rare feat and also a welcome break from light-headed Hollywood teenage flicks. AH.

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## Feature

## The Correlation of Punk &amp; Politics

by Kiera Ormut-Fleishman

In the sweep of socio-political history, musical expression has always resonated in response to the day. Punk is an aggressive form of rock and roll music that often is reflective of political beliefs and reverberates a youthful, vital energy behind a hostile demeanor. In order to understand the correlation between punk music and politics, one cannot view punk as a single musical event that developed in a historical and political vacuum. Rather, there was the convergence of a series of political and musical events that finally expressed themselves in a socio-political explosion that manifested itself as punk.

It is possible to perceive punk as an isolated event in history occurring spontaneously and then depleting itself some five years later. The punk movement in England began in 1975 and lasted only five years. Punk was a reaction to the oppressive political and economic situation in England at the time, forcing youth and the rest of the country to take notice. The youth of the time (many of them not musicians) took to writing music to display their angst and loss of faith in the government system of the country that had left many unemployed and without hope. At the same time, it was easy to abhor the music played on the radio. Disco was the popular trend, and many people were left feeling that rock and roll had died along with its 1960s ideals. As a response to this, the youth of the day began to make their own music that reflected the way they felt. Punk could be seen as an isolated event by the fact that it appeared then disappeared, the music it spawned being much different from any other music of the time, much faster and louder than any music before it. But even with the beginning of rock and roll in the 1950s, the music that was spawned was also reflective of its socio-political environment.

## IN THE BEGINNING...

The birth of rock and roll in the 1950s by "revolutionary" and "rebellious" performers such as Elvis and Jerry Lee Lewis gave way in the early 1960s to the "British Invasion" of the Beatles. The revolutionary music that had been the founding spirit of the early Beatles (of the Cavern Club and Hamburg), gave way to radio-friendly ditties such as "I Want To Hold Your Hand", meaningless songs that were liked by the masses simply because they sounded good, and were co-opted into a neat package of non-threatening, consumer-friendly music.

In 1952 a group first organized under the name of the Letterist International was formed in Paris, France. Five years later in 1957 it was reformed as the Situationist International (SI), at a conference of European avant-garde artists. The Situationist International was a group of intellectuals and artists who critiqued modern society. Their theory was that life is non-continuous and focused on constructing situations and preserving the most important moments of the situation (on film or other mediums) before it evolved into the next

situation. The Situationists thought that the world had to be changed because it was confined by society as a result of modern culture. In 1966 students elected to the student union at a university in the Paris suburbs copied and distributed ten thousand copies of a Situationist pamphlet, spreading the SI's ideas throughout the campus. Later at the Situationist's height in 1968, they spray-painted slogans on the city walls of Paris, vocalizing their boredom and disenchantment with the ways of society. In May 1968, disruptions on the campus of a suburban Paris university began a chain reaction of refusal when students, then factory workers and almost all other public workers took to the streets or barricaded themselves in their workplaces, fought off the police and brought their modern society to a standstill. During the revolt it seemed that the slogans that were spray-painted throughout the city were expressions of mass spontaneity, however, it was only realized afterward, that they were part of the Situationist ideology and appeared in publications by the group. In a speech President Charles de Gaulle gave when he recaptured power in June 1968 he said that the revolution "... was provoked by a few groups in revolt against modern society, against consumer society, against technological society..." (Marcus, 1989)

As the Vietnam War became a more and more intrusive force in American society musicians began writing songs about "revolution" in one form or another. For instance, the Beatles sang: "you say you want a revolution... we all want to change the world," (Beatles, 1968) and Bob Dylan implored politicians to: "please heed the call... for the times they are changing" (Dylan, 1964). The vibrant voice of youth was demanding and listened to, and being disenfranchised was seen as being a good thing since it was clearly a recognizable and highly accepted anti-identity, despite its obvious incongruities.

After the Vietnam War ended, the US and Britain again sought to restabilize society and inoffensive musical forms returned seemingly to sooth the savage spirit. The Beatles dissolved and Paul McCartney began singing about "Silly Little Love Songs..." "What's wrong with that?" he asked, while the Bee Gees gave birth to Disco that became the craze with overly attenuated bass lines and falsetto voices that had no other message than it sounded good on the dance floor with flashing lights. The "cool" of disenfranchised youth of the 1960s was bought-out by major labels to become the social icon represented by John Travolta in a white suit.

## THE DEVELOPMENTS IN ENGLAND

All was not well, however, especially in Britain in the mid-1970s. England was suffering from a number of expanding and previously latent social ills that too many young people found both greatly disturbing and insurmountable. The country was no longer as powerful as it had once been, its colonies

now independent nation-states, yet the British government still continued to try and sell the image of an all-powerful Britain with many opportunities to the youth, which was no longer so. As well, racial intolerance became a foremost symptom as a result of the influx of many non-Caucasians from prior British colonies. An influx of Arab investment money resulted in many famous British landmarks, such as "Harrods", being sold to "foreigners", while poor immigrants were seen as taking jobs away from lower-class British youth who never had the opportunity to attend college or to find meaningful employment with the hope of advancement.

Adding to this general frustration and anger, an oppressive political mood swept the country as Margaret Thatcher became the elected leader of her party (the Conservatives who were made the opposition in 1975), and became Prime Minister of Britain in 1979. The "Iron Lady" as she was known, was prepared through sheer force of will alone to reestablish conservative politics and her version of social control and responsibility. To accomplish this she promoted more independence of the individual from the state, wanted to end "excessive" government interference in the economy, reduce public expenditures (which would enable cutting personal taxes), and the printing of money. Unemployment had been rising steadily in Britain throughout the 1970s, and nearly tripled from 1,000,000 to 3,000,000 under Thatcher's reign, creating a substantial lower class, something that was believed eradicated in the egalitarianism of the 1960s. Other goals Thatcher was set on conquering were the control of Britain's trade unions (who had been on strike periodically throughout the 1970s), and privatizing the national industries (such as British Airways, and steel).

Britain's trade union strikes were brought on at this time by rapidly increasing prices which culminated in a period of almost endless industrial conflict to a point where factories were in operation only three days a week and residential Britain had to resort to candlelight on a regular basis. As well, garbage lined the streets also due to the continual cycle of strikes, and the government seemed unable to control anything that was happening; the full-fledged capitalist recession (with a seven percent unemployment rate), devalued currency, poor living standards, decaying inner cities, and mass poverty.

Thatcher's Conservative Party promoted private property and enterprise, the maintenance of strong military and foreign policy, and wanted to pursue traditional cultural values and institutions. Thatcher succeeded in weakening the power of the trade unions and cut back on welfare provisions. She was admired by the conservative elements of the country while seen as a destructive force by the youth of the day because her policies seemed too strict and hindered youth by privatizing industries, cutting back on welfare, and not dealing with the unemployment issue, leaving young people feeling



disillusioned.

The anger and embitterment of these truly disenfranchised British youth rendered the American-based music of the day completely irrelevant. In fact, it was thought that music had sold out to the multi-national record companies to such a degree that only "anti-music" could be truly reflective of their anarchistic rage; "You didn't need a record company, you didn't need to know how to play your guitar. This was the whole idea behind Punk: Do it yourself. D.I.Y." (Dalton, 1997). This ideal became punk; music not based on melody, musicianship or lyrics but upon the societal noise of nihilism.

### NEVERMIND THE BULLOCKS, HERE COMES THE SEX PISTOLS

Ironically, British punk's main poster band, the Sex Pistols, was brought together by a shopkeeper, Malcom McLaren, in an attempt to promote his shop, Sex. At his store McLaren (a graduate art student) made and sold clothing covered with slogans from the most radical political thinkers of the 1960s he could find, the Situationists. McLaren discovered the members of the Sex Pistols browsing in his shop and helped them start the band, all the while convincing them to wear his clothes. Though the Situationist slogans were from nearly a decade before, they fit perfectly with the boredom and lack of future that the British youth felt in the 1970s; "Club Med, a cheap holiday in other people's misery... Don't change employers, change the employment of life..." (Marcus, 1989). The Situationists expressed almost exactly the same sort of cynicism and tedium that British youth were feeling so it almost made sense that whether realizing it or not, McLaren tapped into an already existent political philosophy which was just what British youth needed, something to guide them through their disillusionment.

As the Sex Pistols began playing concerts and singing socially aware lyrics relevant to the lives of lower-class youth, people listened and punk grew. Punk was a new music that expressed its desperation towards society; "There is no future/In England's Dreaming/Don't Be told what you want/Don't be told what you need/There's no future for you..." (Sex Pistols, 1977). With the beginning of punk it soon became apparent that anyone could start a band and sing about how they felt. Thus came the more authentic punk bands such as the Clash, the Damned, and the Jam among others. The punk scene began to grow throughout Britain with the involvement of normal kids identifying with the music and supporting the bands by going to the concerts, starting their own 'zines (cheap, photocopied magazines focusing on bands and issues important to the author), or starting their own bands. McLaren's fashion sense also spread through the scene with kids proudly displaying their lower class roots using safety pins to hold together clothing and by writing political messages on their shirts and pants. In this way the punk scene thrived as an underground movement. It didn't mean anything specific to be a punk, rather it meant one was anti-everything.

In 1976 punk became well known to the public almost accidentally and practically overnight. That year the Sex Pistols were interviewed on a six o'clock talk show as a quick replacement for the band Queen, who had cancelled. During the live interview, Johnny Rotten (the singer of the Sex Pistols) muttered a profanity under his breath which prompted the host of the show, Grundy, to begin to bait the band, prompting them to utter more profanity. A van of police officers was called in to deal with this (even though there was no physical violence or threat of physical violence breaking loose) and the mass majority of middle-aged British citizens were outraged by the show. One man kicked in his television screen out of the rage he felt towards the Sex Pistols for swearing on TV. This band seemed to embody everything the average Brit feared and loathed. The next day, news of this event covered the front page of newspapers and was reported on the nightly news. This media rampage lasted for the next week; "The commercial life of punk rock had been kick started by what was in reality a rather petty and insignificant piece of outrage. But this was really a manifestation of a declining, post-colonial nation in a state of terminal identity confusion" (Boot, 1996). From then on the Sex Pistols and other bands such as the Clash were signed to the major record labels they had once warred against for their radio-friendly music. Hence punk was brought to the world stage.

By October 1976 the Sex Pistols had signed a record contract with EMI music for £40,000. Though punk continued to resonate the anti-societal sounds it had begun with, the Sex Pistols were banned from playing certain shows throughout England as city mayors saw them as a threat and potential source of disruption. With the release of the Sex Pistols' album in 1977 came the number one single from it, "God Save the Queen". This song was seen as anti-nationalistic and along with the Sex Pistols' rude behavior, and "I-don't-care" attitude EMI thought it would be best to pay off the Sex Pistols and void their contract.

By 1978 punk had long since spread across Britain and as the unsteady political climate continued, punk bands continued to satirize it in their songs. By this time punk bands were breaking attendance records at concerts, no longer a small underground movement. More and more bands were signed to major labels – the antithesis of what punk had originally been about, while at the same time providing a sound future for what had started out as a group of disillusioned youth who felt that there was no future for them. The Sex Pistols went on their first and last tour of the United States, and by the end of the year had broken up.

By 1979 "Punk" bands were the norm throughout Britain. In an end of year poll taken by a mainstream music journal the NME The Clash were named "best group" while the Jam's latest album was named "best album of the year". This, from a journal that had only four years before loathed punk just as much as the rest of the world.

### THE NEW PUNK ORDER

By 1980 the original punk ideology had died, as punk had been co-opted by the very institutions punks had been raging against since its inception. Many of these youth now had a future and were no longer the lower-class kids bored with the society they lived in. The rest of the kids who had been into punk since the beginning, moved on, and punk drifted away, ready for another new musical trend to take its place. Some punk bands remained and more were started throughout the next decade, however, this form of punk was (like the original) an underground scene.

In the 1990s punk reemerged with bands such as Nirvana, calling itself "Grunge" yet embodying all the aspects of punk. This time it was American youth that redefined musical rebellion. Further into the mid-1990s bands closer to the original punk sound emerged from the United States and Britain; again sparking the same interest with youth as it did in the beginning, except this time it was not a new or original style of music.

Since then punk has grown as a sub-culture again, with some bands getting just as popular as the Sex Pistols in the 1970s. While some of the subject matter of these songs has remained quite similar to the original message, punk has also broadened to include many other political messages such as "food not bombs," (anti-war and pro-helping people who are in need), and "anti-racist-action" (taking a stance against racism).

Upon close inspection it is evident that punk was not an isolated event that occurred at a random time. Instead, it was spawned from decades of music being reflective of current events and the particular political situation that existed in Britain at a particular moment in time. This movement would not have taken place without its preceding history. Clearly punk was the manifestation of an authentic, environmentally induced, political movement and was not just another musical trend. Unlike other musical trends that come and go, punk has remained a vibrant part of youth culture providing a means of expressing anger and frustration at the oppressive political regime of the day.

All the girls say  
(Yea yea yea yea, yea yea yea yea)  
What? I can't hear you  
(Yea yea yea yea)  
All my boys say  
(Yea yea yea yea, yea yea yea yea)  
Break it down

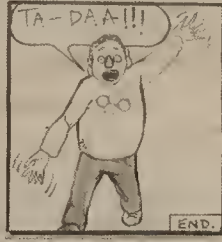
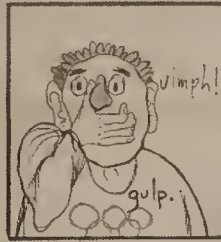
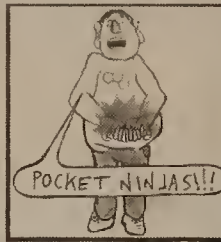
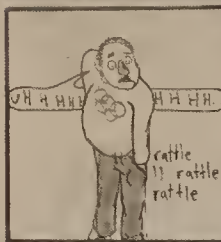
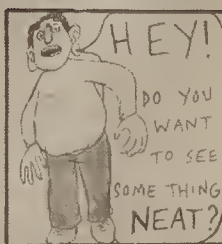
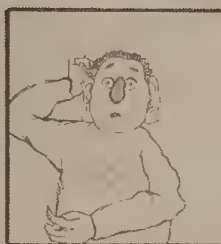
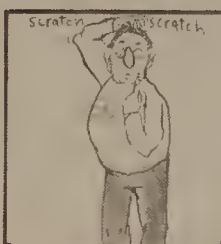
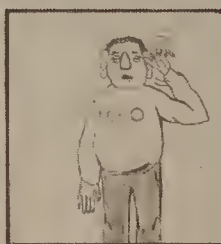
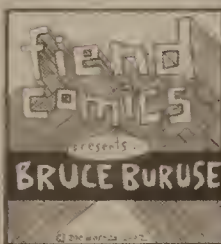
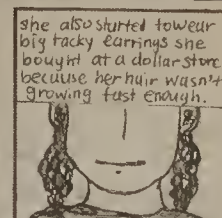
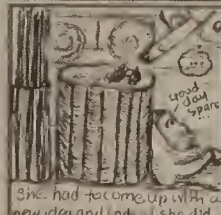
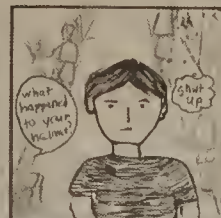
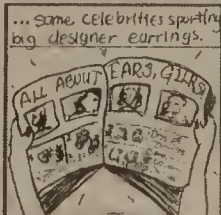
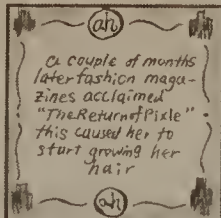
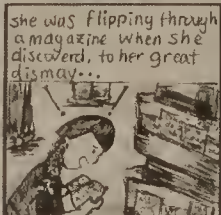
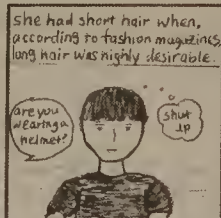
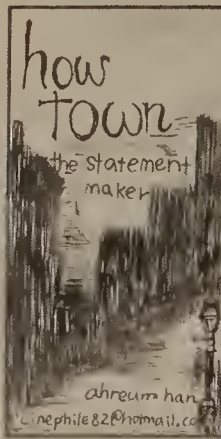
### Herald General Meeting

Open to anyone and everyone  
interested in the Innis Herald.

Wednesday, October 23rd  
Room 108, Innis College.  
6:30PM

timbits will be in attendance.





## Events Calendar

**Imagine Native Media Arts Festival**  
Town Hall, Innis College  
[www.aboriginalmedia.org/imagine](http://www.aboriginalmedia.org/imagine)  
thurs Oct 24 - sun Oct 27

**David Miller, Nuffeld College, Oxford**  
"Holding Nations Responsible"  
2 - 4pm: Rm. 108N, Munk Centre  
thurs Oct 17

**ICSS Stress Relief Night**  
Food and drink free all night.  
9pm: Innis College Cafe  
thurs Oct 24

**ICSS Halloween Pub Night**  
Free and all-ages. Innis College Cafe.  
thurs Oct 31

**Marlene Smith's Musical Theatre Gala**  
What's A Nice Lady Like Her Doing In A Business Like This? \$150, with tax receipt.  
Hart House Theatre  
fri Oct 18

**SAC DATES:**  
fri Oct 18 - Mandatory All-Candidates Meeting 7pm: Hart House  
mon Oct 21 - 12:01am: Campaigning begins  
sun Oct 2 - 11:59pm: Campaigning ends  
mon Oct 28 - wed Oct 30 Voting on ROSI  
thurs Oct 31 - Results for the SAC Elections are posted.

**Drama Society Presentations: Free.**  
7pm: South Sitting Room, Hart House  
sun Oct 13: Oscar Wilde's *An Ideal Husband*  
sun Oct 20: Wilde's *Lady Windemere's Fan*  
sun Oct 27: *The Taming of the Shrew*  
sun Nov 3: *As You Like It*  
sun Nov 10: *Romeo and Juliet*  
sun Nov 17: Bernard Shaw's *Arms and the Man*

**Fall exhibition of the University Art Centre:**  
On Paper - recent gifts of works of art on paper to the University of Toronto Art Collection.

[www.utoronto.ca/artcentre](http://www.utoronto.ca/artcentre)  
tues Sept 10 - sat Nov 9

**Grigoriy Golosov, Political Science and Sociology, European University at St. Petersburg**  
"Political Parties and Election in the Regions of Russia"  
2 - 4pm: Rm. 108N Munk Centre  
fri Nov 08

**Prof. Noam Chomsky**  
"Prospects for Peace: The Global Perspective"  
[http://scienceforpeace.ca.utoronto.ca/Special\\_Activities/Signs-1.jpg](http://scienceforpeace.ca.utoronto.ca/Special_Activities/Signs-1.jpg)  
Tickets are \$10  
8pm: Bloor St. United Church, 300 Bloor St. W  
sun Nov 10

**ENSU Fall Seminars**  
4pm: Room 2093, Earth Sciences Centre  
"Shifting organizational culture toward sustainability."  
Joint with the Sustainable Toronto project  
Pamela Robinson, Lecturer, Urban & Environmental Studies, Innis College, University of Toronto; Meg Shields, Corporate Management & Policy Consultant, City of Toronto; Anne Mitchell, Executive Director, Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy; Lisa King, Sustainability Expert, Toronto and Region Conservation Authority.  
wed Oct 23

**David Miller, Nuffeld College, Oxford**  
"Holding Nations Responsible"  
2 - 4pm: Rm. 108N, Munk Centre  
thurs Oct 17

**Showing of Digging for the Truth**  
Amnesty International's feature on human rights violations in Guatemala.  
7:30pm: Friends' House, 60 Lowther Avenue  
mon Oct 21

**"The role of information technology in environmental management."**  
Bernard Fleet, Business Development Manager, Electrovaya Inc, a publicly listed company in the business of portable power.  
wed Nov 6

**"Natural disasters: what are insurers doing?"**  
Stanley Griffin, President and CEO, Insurance Bureau of Canada  
wed Nov 20

**Trivia Challenge**  
6pm reception with event beginning at 7pm, \$20 for Hart House members and alumni, \$15 for students. Contact (416)978-2452  
Hart House  
wed Oct 16

**Robert Bates, Center for International Development and Department of Government, Harvard**  
"The Foundations of Political Order"  
2 - 4pm: Rm. 108N, Munk Centre  
fri Nov 1

**A Student of Weather**  
\$110 for a series of five lectures  
8pm: Hart House Theatre  
mon Oct 21 - thurs Oct 24

**Michael Barnett, Political Science, University of Wisconsin, Madison**  
"The United Nations and Rwanda: How the UN Mistook Genocide for Ethnic Conflict"  
2 - 4pm: Rm. 208N, Munk Centre  
fri Oct 25

